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A S E R M O N

PREACH'D before the
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
L O R D - M A Y O R,
ALDERMEN, SHERIFFS, and GOVERNORS
OF THE
Several HOSPITALS
OF THE
City of L O N D O N,
I N
St. Bridget's C H U R C H,
On *Wednesday* in EASTER-WEEK,
A P R I L the 14th. 1728.

By J O S E P H W A T S O N, D. D.
R E C T O R of St. Stephen in Walbrook.

L O N D O N :

Printed for GEORGE STRAHAN, at the *Golden-Ball*, over-
against the *Royal-Exchange* in Cornhil. M.DCC.XXVIII.

Becher Mayor.

*Martis xiiij. die Maij 1728. Annoq;
Regni Regis GEORGII secundi,
Magnaë Britanniaë, &c. primo.*

IT is order'd, That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend Dr. WATSON, for his Sermon preached before this Court, and the Governors of the several Hospitals of this City, at the Parish-Church of St. Bridget, on *Wednesday* in *Easter-Week* last, and that he be desired to print the same.

JACKSON.





LUKE VI. 35.

*Do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again ;
and great shall be your reward.*



OUR Saviour is here instructing his disciples in the nature of that divine grace of charity, which was to be the peculiar excellency of his religion ; and by the practice whereof, its professors were to distinguish themselves both to their own and their master's honour.

AND he doth this in so high a strain, with respect both to acts of forgiveness and acts of beneficence, as neither the practices, nor scarce the speculations of men had yet arriv'd at.

HITHERTO it had been thought sufficient, even by the most rigid interpreters, as well as the most punctual observers of the law, to love our friends ; and, excepting the few cases which were there *expressly* order'd otherwise, to do good only to them that had done good to us, or from whom we might reasonably expect it.

BUT our Lord here severely reproves this conduct, as an argument of a narrow, selfish, and degenerate spirit; and shews it to be so far from entitling us to the favour of God, (the end always supposed to be aim'd at in the exercise of charity) that it gives us no better a pretence to it, than the greatest sinners themselves have: those I mean who are remarkable for their want of charity and good nature.

FOR when our Saviour saith, as he doth here in this chapter, *If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again.* I say, when our Saviour says this, he means by sinners such more especially as are *noted* for the *hardness of their hearts*, and the *mercinariness of their tempers*; as you may see by the * parallel place in *St. Matthew*, where, instead of *sinners*, it is said, do not even the *publicans* the same? a set of men that were detested for their rigorous and unmerciful practices.

AND indeed, what should hinder the most selfish and ill-natur'd wretches from practising charity at this rate? To be ready to do good offices to such as have it in their power to requite us, is so far from laying any restraint upon our covetousness, that it is oftentimes one of its principal arts. Neither does it put any man to the trial of his good nature, or interfere in the least with any revengeful disposition he may have, to live peaceably with such as have never offended him.

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* Mat. v. 46.

IT was high time therefore for our Lord to correct the manners of men in these cases, and to teach his disciples to act in them upon higher and more generous principles ; unless he had intended to license the practice of revenge, and could have been contented to have seen mercy and good nature banish'd out of the world, and humane conversation put solely on the foot of sordid avarice and base design.

AND yet he was too well acquainted with our nature, and the springs of action in it, to offer at exciting us to any practices, without assuring us at the same time, that the issues of them should terminate in our own interest. Wherefore, when he bids us *do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again*, lest we should mistake him to be teaching an impracticable doctrine, he immediately subjoins, *and your reward shall be great*. By which 'tis plain he does not intend that men should entertain no hopes from their good deeds ; but only not such hopes, as he had observed them commonly to act upon ; he doth not command them to lay aside all views in these cases, but only changes their object, as if he had said, do good, and lend, not looking for your recompense, as is too often done, from the hands of men, and in this life only, but from the hand of God, and principally in that life which is to come ; agreeable to his words in another place, where he says, *These cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just*.

THE Observations I shall at present make upon the words are only these two. First, that it is lawful for christians to do good in hope of a reward. Secondly, that

that the hope of a reward from God is the only proper and sufficient motive thereto.

FIRST then, I observe, that it is lawful for christians to do good in hope of a reward.

WHEN one considers how often we are invited to good works, and indeed to all manner of duty, in scripture, with this very motive: when one considers too that we are there not only invited to obedience by it, but in many places expressly commanded and required in the way thereof to have regard unto it, and to seek it before all things, as a proper test of that faith which overcometh the world, and qualifies us for the enjoyment of God's favour: when we consider again, that in virtue of this motive, all the most eminent saints we read of, as well since as before the coming of Christ, served God both actively and passively, nay, that our Saviour himself as man in his sinless, perfect and meritorious obedience had respect unto the recompense of reward, for it is said of him, *that for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God*: when we consider lastly the frame of our own nature, how impossible it is for us to cease loving ourselves; and if it were possible, yet how contrary it would be to God's design in creating us, which was to do us good; and that this is the very ground and foundation of all the service he expects from us: when we consider these things, I say, it is surprizing that it should ever come into the head of any christian, especially of such as call themselves christian divines, to call in question the truth of the observation we have so justly made.

AND yet it cannot be deny'd, that this hath been done. We have been taught by some sublime rather than solid doctors, that to serve God in hope of a reward, tho' it be the heavenly reward, is a mercenary and servile, and consequently not that true, filial and loving obedience to which we are called by the gospel of Christ. And by this means christianity hath been represented to the world as a romantick and impracticable religion, under the pretence of doing greater honour to its author.

THE mistake seems to lie in considering the happiness of man as a thing separate from, and independent on the glory of God; whereas these two things are so united, that the only way man hath to his own happiness is to endeavour after it by such measures as tend to God's glory.

IT hath been observed, that the scriptures require us to do *all* to the *glory* of God, and out of *love* to him; and hence it hath been argued, that we cannot serve him, as we ought to do, if at the same time we have any regard to ourselves; whereas it is impossible for us to shew our regard to ourselves more, than by such actions as do at the same time honour him: nay we cannot possibly befriend ourselves by any other; and those which do honour him most, are the very same that serve our own interest best. On the other hand, if a man could be so unnatural as designedly to seek his own hurt; in order hereto it would be necessary for him to fall into some such ways as do manifestly oppose the divine glory.

THIS holds true, generally speaking, with respect to our interests even in this life. If a man for instance hath a mind to establish a good reputation, and make
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himself beloved and esteem'd among men, he cannot take a surer way to this, than to exercise himself in the practice of those virtues which reflect honour upon his maker. And if you could suppose him so abandon'd as wilfully to affect the hatred and contempt of mankind, his way to this likewise would be, to give himself up to such practices, as tend to the disgrace of his own nature, and by consequence to the eclipsing of his glory from whom he derives it. The Observation is equally true of every other instance, wherein the felicity of this present life is concern'd: and much more is it so, if we extend it to the happiness of the future state.

FOR to desire and seek after this, what is it but to desire and seek after a more intimate union and communion with God? And surely we can't give a better proof that we do honour and glorify him, than when our conduct shews that we place our utmost ambition in the enjoyment of him. The Scriptures therefore mean one and the same thing, whether they propound to us, the glory of God, or the love of God, or the inestimable rewards of his heavenly kingdom, as the end and motive of our obedience: nor can we possibly separate our desire of these rewards in the Scripture sense of them, either from the love of God, or a desire to glorify him, so as to make these a good, and the other a bad motive to obedience, without concluding that the holy Scriptures are inconsistent with themselves: without accusing the Holy Spirit of insincerity and deceitfulness in its proposals: without arraigning and condemning the piety of all those holy men whose example he has recorded for our imitation and instruction, not excepting Jesus Christ himself: and to say no more, without making it absolutely impossible for mortal man, constituted, circumstanc'd and influenced as he is, to do the works that are
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necessary to his salvation. For we may appeal to the consciences of the most perfect christians, whether all our preaching would not be in vain, if it did not appear that to be dutiful was the way to be happy, or, as the apostle argues, whether it be not necessary for such as come unto God, not only to believe that he is, but also that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And if it be so necessary to the doing of our duty, to *believe* that God will reward us, surely it can never be sinful in us to *desire* and *hope* for it.

INDEED, Were it possible for man to perform any part of his duty, without all regard to himself, it must be that which relates to the exercise of charity and beneficence; because this consists in supplying the wants of others out of our fullness, and for that reason looks like expending our own happiness upon them. Yet for all that the love of ourselves always does, and always will accompany us, even here. For we are doing that which, all circumstances consider'd, we judge to be best for us; we are giving ourselves a pleasure, or at least easing ourselves of a pain; we are purchasing a good name, or insuring God's blessing, or warding off the reproaches of conscience: Something or other we are aiming at, which we think makes for our benefit more than that, which we part with, takes from it; altho' we seem at the same time not only to others, but even to ourselves also, wholly to overlook it. In short we cannot avoid loving ourselves, and seeking our own interest, either well or ill judged of, in every thing we do. It is a passion that clings as close to us as our very being, and cannot cease but with it. Shall that then be a sin in us, without which we cannot exist? Shall we be bound to do

good to others, to which we have no natural necessity, and yet while we are doing it, not allowed to desire that it may turn also to our own good, which no man can possibly forbear? Away with all such conceits. They proceed from nothing but the vanity of spiritual pride, and can tend to nothing but the encouragement of hypocrisy, as they take away the foundation of all real religion.

THERE is great care however to be had here, in the choice of the good we propose to ourselves. For tho' we cannot, neither is it expected we should, do good to other men, but in hopes thereby, one way or other, to better our own condition; yet we are not at liberty to have what views of that kind we please, neither will every view which we may possibly have of that kind answer our purpose; for it is the hope of a reward from God that is the only proper and sufficient motive in these cases.

THIS was my second observation, and the truth of it will easily appear, after I have acquainted you, that by a reward from God, I don't mean the felicity of the future state only: I mean that principally indeed, because it is principally proposed, and best deserves our regard; but I mean the good things of this life also, in proportion to their value, with those restrictions, and in that subordination in which God hath been pleased to propose them. The expectation of a reward from God, taken in this sense and latitude, I say, is the only proper and sufficient motive to good works. And, *First*, It is the only *proper* motive to them.

WE call the giving of alms and such like deeds good works, not so much for the subject matter of them, tho' that is always something beneficial, as from the good and charitable principle from which they are supposed to proceed. For take away this, and they change their nature, and become criminal. Nothing therefore can be a proper motive to them, but what is consistent with charity, and yet it is so far from being consistent with charity, that it is a great abuse thereof, if we propose any thing to ourselves, but the favour of God, when we do good to men; for if we give with so mean a design, and so ignoble hopes, as to receive any thing in exchange beneath this, we are as one ingeniously expresses it, "no longer acting the christian, but the merchant, not exercising a religion, but driving a trade; and that of all trades the most sordid and base, as it is not to be carried on without dissimulation and deceit: for he that deals in this paltry traffick, while he pretends to nothing, but free love and generous friendship, hides a hook in all the gifts he bestows, and designs them not as presents to enrich his friend, but as baits to take him." Charity therefore I say is not practised in such cases, but only pretended to and abused.

IF here you should say, how is the case alter'd, when we do good in hope of God's favour? Is it any more consistent with charity, to do good for the sake of a greater than of a lesser recompense? Doth not the love of ourselves influence us as much in one case as the other? And is there any other

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way of offending against charity in acts of beneficence, but by having a mercenary regard to ourselves, and not doing them for the sake and benefit of them that receive them?

To this we must reply, by confessing, that they that do good in hope or prospect of God's favour, have certainly a regard, and a very great one too, at the same time to themselves; and yet it can't be call'd a mercenary one, nor does it trespass in the least upon the charity they pretend to, because they know it is a necessary condition of obtaining *that reward* to be truly charitable, *i. e.* wholly disinterested with respect to all expectations from men, for the good which they do unto them: so that it is not the having of a regard to ourselves, simply consider'd, in the doing of our good deeds, that makes them mercenary, but it is the having *such* regards as are not founded upon the necessity of our being *truly* charitable, but are indeed served by a meer *pretence* to it, which is the case of all regards whatsoever, that are not regulated with a view to the favour of God.

2dly, THE hope of a reward from God is the only *sufficient* motive to good works.

WHATEVER else we propose by them, may possibly, nay very probably will disappoint us. If we aim at a requital from the persons obliged, they may never be in a condition to make one, or if they should, they may prove ungrateful. If we do them out of vain glory, and for ostentation sake, the world will be apt, how artful soever we may be, to find out the baseness of our motive, and defeat us of

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our praise. But if it should not be found out, yet good designs we know are not always well interpreted by men; envy and emulation do often find out ways to flurr and depretiate even them. And thus it is, with respect to every other motive we can possibly act upon, excepting the love and Favour of God. Whereas he that aims at this only, hath no chance to miscarry, unless he draws back and repents; for *God is not unrighteous, that he should forget our works, and labour that proceedeth of love*, if we ourselves be not *weary and faint in our Minds*. This therefore must be the only sufficient motive to good Works, as it is the only one of which we can't be disappointed.

BUT supposing other motives were ever so sure to be obtain'd by us, yet they would deprive us of a greater satisfaction than they bring us.

OUR Saviour tells us, 'tis more blessed to give than to receive. And this saying of his is most certainly true, whether we understand, by receiving here a bounty, or a debt. If the former, the sense of it will be, it is more eligible to oblige, than to be obliged; which no body, I think, will dispute. If the latter, the sense is, it is more eligible to oblige, than even to be requited; which will appear, I think, upon a little consideration, to be as true as the other. For while we are charitably obliging mankind, and bestowing favours on them, purely because we find they are wanted by them, and are helpful to them, our souls are feasted, as it were, with the repast of angels; for the happiness of those pure and benevolent spirits consists, in a good measure, of the joys that flow from a sense of the good offices they do

us, without all merit on our part, or the least hope of a requital from us. Nay, 'twould not be presuming too much to say, that hereby we partake in some degree of the complacency and satisfaction which the Godhead itself hath in communicating its goodness to all its creatures; but this delight, heavenly and angelical as it is, is at an end, when once the persons we have obliged, have requited us. And what is it that takes up its room? but only the satisfaction, such as it is, of having those benefits replac'd in our possession, which we had parted with before, for no other reason, but because we thought it more eligible so to do, than to retain them. Indeed, there is no satisfaction in this case at all; but where, by the course of God's providence, the returns of our kindness are become needful and convenient for us; which is a satisfaction that no man surely, who is in his right mind, would covet; because of the indigence to which it owes itself. Doubtless it is a sorry exchange for the pleasures of a pure and disinterested bounty.

BUT besides, 'tis worthy our notice, that by our benefactions we gain a kind of superiority over all that receive them: for let a man be never so much above us in condition, quality and the like; yet if we confer a benefit upon him, we are in that respect his superior; and on that account entitled, in some measure, to his homage and service. And this is an advantage which we are all of us naturally fond of, and desirous to maintain: but when once our kindnesses are repay'd, there is an end of all the pleasure this advantage gave us, and we are immediately on the level with those on whom we so pleasingly look'd as our inferiors before. So that there must be as much more satisfaction in doing good without a requital, than there is in receiving one, as
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we are more ambitious in any respect to excel, than to be upon an equality with one another. Add to this, that no requital from the hand of man can be an equivalent for a good action perform'd upon a generous and truly christian principle; for the merit of that is to be estimated by the piety of his spirit that doth it, which is a thing of too noble a nature to be compensated for by any return that man can make. Gratitude itself, in its best measures, falls short here, because this hath an obligation already receiv'd for its foundation, which the other hath not. So that the better our good deeds are, the more heroic and disinterested in their principles, the less possible would it be for us to be requited for them in this way.

BUT that which shews the insufficiency of all worldly motives to good works principally is, that if these were to take place, and men were to act upon no other, the most pitiable cases would certainly be overlook'd and neglected by us; and they, that stand in the greatest need of our help, would always be the farthest from it. For, on such a foot as this, men would not only be apt, but it would really be their wisest way, to single out the most potent, wealthy, and flourishing in their circumstances to bestow their favours on; because on them they might ground the justest hopes of a requital. They might, indeed, very possibly be mistaken in this, because they that are most able, are not always most willing to pay their debts of gratitude: but still they might reasonably think, that where power and ability is, there the soil is more promising, than where nothing but indigence and misery appears, and there therefore they would be inclin'd to sow the seeds of their mercenary bounty.

By this you see how wisely as well as mercifully God calls us off from the mean and fordid, the weak and beggarly motives with which the world invites us to charity: motives that are so far from answering the real purposes of it, *viz.* engaging us to give relief where relief is needful, which is the end and business of charity, that the natural and proper effect of them is rather to encrease the sorrows of the afflicted by an uncompassionate preference of those to our favour, who are already at ease: you see, I say, how wisely as well as mercifully God calls us off from these, to a motive of another kind and more generous influence, even the hope of his favour, and that principally in heaven; by which charity is purely and sufficiently enforc'd, and the poor and miserable are made its principal objects.

SUFFICIENTLY enforc'd, I say, for while we have heaven in our view, we need not be anxious about any other recompense; *there* being happiness enough, and more than enough to make us amends for our good deeds, how charitably soever we have done them, or how unthankfully soever they have been receiv'd. For indeed, what is there in them, even the best of them, that they should be recompensed with such an exceeding great reward, were not the mercies of God much greater than our deserts? We feed the hungry, cloath the naked, comfort the sick, ransom the captive, and the like, *i. e.* we contribute the little that is in our power to prevent or to relieve the *transient* and *bodily* miseries of our brethren; and for this we ourselves are made compleatly happy both in body and soul to all eternity.

WE do these charitable offices too without any real hardship to ourselves : I mean, after our our own necessities are served, and out of the goods which God himself hath given us for that very purpose ; and for these services, mean as they are, we reap the fruits of that almighty love, when God spared not his only Son, but sent him into this miserable world in the likeness of sinful man to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption.

WE take pains to instruct the ignorant, to reclaim the vicious, and to set forward, by all the methods that are in our power, the salvation of all men ; and for our successes this way, how little soever, nay for our very intentions, we partake in a distinguishing manner of the glories purchased by the infinitely greater labours of our Lord.

WE extend our good offices of both kinds to the thankless and unworthy, to strangers and enemies, doing good to them that hate us, and praying for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. Which we reckon an high pitch of charity and goodness ; and so in truth it is : so high, that 'tis to be feared we rarely attain unto it. But yet, whenever we do, we have no reason to complain for want of a full recompense ; for in return hereof we are reconciled unto God, and taken into the embraces of his *unspeakable* mercy : we who by reason of sin were become the greatest strangers and most inveterate enemies to him, and consequently more unworthy of his favour than we can possibly be of one another's : so much more unworthy, as his fa-

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your is preferable to ours, or sin a greater provocation to him, than any misdemeanor can be to us.

THUS graciously hath God provided for the relief even of the most indigent and miserable, by taking the repayment of the mercies, which we shew them, upon himself; and thus hath he removed the danger, they would otherwise have been in, of perishing unregarded; so that we have no need to distrust our reward in the most unpromising cases, nor ever to stint our bounty for fear we should go beyond our recompense: nay the most unpromising have the surest title to a reward, and the more we disperse, the more we shall gather.

GIVE me leave now to apply, what hath been hitherto advanced, to the encouragement of those laudable charities, for which this city hath been so long and so justly renown'd.

YOU are not invited, you see, to these or any other good works for no ends, nor yet for any mean or deceitful ones, either of which, to men of your wisdom and penetration, would have been lost labour; but for ends worthy of God to propose, and of your utmost zeal to obtain.

BY your methods of life, and frequent dealings with mankind, you well know how naturally every man pursues his own happiness; and the great experience you have had of worldly things must have convinc'd you, that what we so naturally and so universally pursue, is nevertheless not to be found in *them*: either in their greatest affluence, or their choicest allotments; doubtless you must be more effectually convinc'd

vinc'd of this, than others, who have had but little experience of the world, and for that reason are still apt to imagine, that there is a great deal more satisfaction in the acquisitions of it, than they, that possess them, find. *Your* minds therefore, we hope, are in a good measure prepared already for the exhortation we must now give you, *viz.* that you would place your happiness in the favour of God, and let his heavenly reward be the principal aim of all your labours: that in order thereto you would exercise yourselves in good works, and think those fruits of your industry, which you can spare, after your own reasonable occasions have been consider'd, never better, never so well bestow'd, as when the poor and needy are refreshed and benefited by them. For this our Saviour tells us is the way to that reward; this is laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where *neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, nor thieves break thro' and steal.* This is accumulating riches which have no anxiety mixt with their enjoyment, and of which no accident can deprive you. Whereas *you* cannot but know, and many of you, no doubt, have in your time severely felt it, that the treasures which we are so solicitous to lay up for ourselves on earth, have, with all their other mortifying imperfections, a great uncertainty in their tenure.

POSSESS'D then, I say, with such a sense of things, as we have reason to presume you are, there can be no need to spend your time in a general exhortation to charity and good works; methinks you rather wish me to speak my sense of those particular kinds of them, which the wisdom and piety of your ancestors have so laudably begun, and recommended to your support and further encouragement. I must crave your attention therefore while the report of them is read.

Here the REPORT was read.

YOU have heard by this Report, a melancholick account of the present state and condition of mankind: to what variety of miseries many of them are actually exposed, and all of us equally liable. Some are bereft of their parents, and with them of all support, in their infancy; and left, as we say, to the wide world, even before they are able to express their wants, or to ask assistance. Some are thrown upon the compassion of their fellow-creatures by sickness, or other accidents unfortunately met with, in working for their bread perhaps, or it may be in serving their country. Others are seized with lunacy and madness; and so made incapable either of caring for themselves, or so much as thanking those that care for them. And another sort there is who want indeed neither health, nor strength, nor understanding; and yet are more unhappy in the possession of these endowments, than even the aforementioned wretches are without them: such I mean as are enslaved by vicious habits and customs; and in consequence thereof, are not content to be only idle and burthensom to their neighbours, but mischievous also whenever they have opportunity.

BUT this account, melancholick as it is, hath however some mixture of comfort in it. For if we are exposed to these evils, we are not, you see, thanks be to God; wholly destitute in this city, of proper remedies for them. These, indeed, are not, as yet, equal to the exigencies of the several cases, and that is the reason of these solemn and anniversary meetings, when the preacher is to persuade you, in the name of God, and for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ, who dy'd for our sins,

sins, and as at this time was raised again for our justification, to fill up the measures of your ancestors piety by fresh contributions, as the necessities of your several Hospitals require.

You have the Report in your hands, and by that you will see where your help is most wanted; and wherever it is most wanted, there let it in God's name, and without any partial respects be apply'd. For in truth, the design of every one of these foundations is so good, and they are all of them, I verily believe, so honourably and religiously govern'd and managed, that I know not how to give the preference to one more than to another.

If you pitch upon *Christ's Hospital*; there you will act the part of a father to the fatherless. There you will present little, poor, harmless and helpless infants to the embraces of Christ, who hath in so remarkable a manner declar'd himself to be well-pleased with them. There they will be nursed as it were in his own immediate family: in a house, I mean, that not unfitly bears his Name. There they will be educated in his faith, and instructed how to honour and serve him. There they will be fitted also for several employments useful to the world, particularly for that on which the trade and wealth of our own country so visibly depends: navigation.

If you incline to think, that *St. Bartholomew's*, or *St. Thomas's Hospital* wants your encouragement most; there you will act the part of the good *Samaritan*, whose praise is in the Gospel, pouring wine and oil into the wounds of the unfortunate, binding up the sores of the leazar, making the bed of the sick, and ministering to them.

them all under their various wants and complaints : and who, that hath a heart of flesh, and not of stone, can go to those sorrowful places, and view the many objects that there present themselves for relief, under almost all the conceivable forms of misery and pain, without putting on bowels of mercy and compassion for them ?

IF you are of that opinion touching either of the two houses for work, or correction ; here also children are religiously and virtuously brought up and bred to honest arts and trades. Here indigent and miserable people, and such as are in great distress have cloathing and such other relief as their necessities require. And here too, which is no less charity than the other, the sturdy vagrant and idle beggar have correction duly and seasonably dispens'd to them, whereby they are admonished, not only properly, but sometimes, 'tis to be hop'd, effectually too, to amend their manners ; for the rod and reproof, saith the wise man, give wisdom : wisdom of the best sort, it may be, a sense of religion ; or at least a worldly wisdom, a more cautious behaviour outwardly, not to offend any more against those wholesom laws they have felt the smart of : and who, that wishes well either to our religion or our government ? Who, that desires the peace and welfare of this great city, and the security of all its honest and industrious inhabitants, could be content to see us want such restraints as these places are to idle, lewd, pilfering, disorderly and mischievous persons of all sorts ?

IF you adjudge your charity to the Hospital for keeping and curing lunatick and distracted persons ; here it must be said too, that it is most commendably employ'd. For surely, more deplorable objects than these are no
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where to be met with. A man bereft of his understanding, still retaining the form and figure of a man, is a very shocking sight. When one views him in the best light, as doing only frantick and sportive, silly and unaccountable things, one cannot help, out of concern for the honour of our common nature, to wish him restored; but when one observes him to be, as he often is, and as the lunatics in the Gospel, on whom our Saviour had such compassion, are represented, *fore vexed, tearing himself, wallowing, foaming, gnashing with his teeth, and pining away, falling oft into the water, and oft into the fire*; insensible of all harm to himself, nor regarding how much he doth to others, nay, resolutely bent, which is often the case, to *destroy* both himself and all that come near him, not distinguishing friend from foe, the wife of his bosom, or the children of his body: when one observes him, I say, under such wretched disorders as these, what would not even a stranger to him do, to set him free and recover him? And 'tis not to be estimated what a dear friend or relation to him would do, or give to bring him to his right mind, to be eased of the pain which he himself feels from his agonies, and released from the fears which they ever and anon put him into. What a pity then would it have been, if, in this place of wealth, which is so often the cause of this distemper, thro' the anxious cares, perplexities, and disappointments that attend it, there had not been a provision made for the cure of such persons as fall into it! nay, I may say (and with true concern I speak it) what a pity is it, that this provision is yet so scanty, that the governors of it are forc'd to turn out their incurables, and expose them again to the world; and, which I take to be still worse, the world again to them!

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THIS case indeed is *begun* to be consider'd ; and it is so compassionate an one, and at the same time so necessary to the making this Hospital a thorough relief to the unhappy persons it was design'd for, that I will not suffer my self to doubt, but that in time it will be consider'd *effectually*.

AND now, my Brethren, I have no intention longer to detain you, than while I advise you to consider well of the excellencies of these several charities which we have set before you, and to resolve with yourselves, before you go hence, while the favourable impression of them, if any such hath been made, is warm upon your minds, to do your best to support, encourage and improve them ; so may ye justly hope that the blessing of God will descend upon you both in your publick and private capacities : so may ye follow your several occupations and employments with a reasonable assurance, that whatsoever ye undertake shall prosper in your hand : and so shall all events, even the afflictions of mankind, minister to the encrease of your everlasting happiness.

Now to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, and Glory, Power, and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.